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AN

HISTORICAL RHAPSODY

ON MR. POPE.

By the EDITOR of

THE POLITICAL CONFERENCES.



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ARMY

HISTORICAL CALIFORNIA

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BY THE DIRECTOR

THE HISTORICAL CALIFORNIA



1880

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TO
THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
THE FOLLOWING HISTORICAL RHAPSODY
ON MR. POPE,
THE GREATEST ENGLISH POET OF HIS TIME,
WHO WAS VISITED AND ESTEEMED
BY THE FATHER OF
HER ROYAL CONSORT,
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY HER MOST DUTIFUL AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,
THOMAS TYERS.

THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, D. C.

TO THE HONORABLE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
FROM THE HONORABLE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

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[v]

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

IF I had adopted the hint of an intelligent acquaintance, this Rhapsody would have endeavoured to have found its way to Lord Mansfield and to Lord Marchmont, the two surviving executors and trustees of Mr. Pope. But I declined the thought of addressing it to any Man living, having obtained the permission of inscribing it to the greatest Lady in the three Kingdoms.

The writer hopes, that the influence of her Royal Name will introduce it into the highest company, and that it may have the good fortune of obtaining the more friends, on the account of Her, who has not an enemy in the world.

Pro-

Protected by the title of this Essay, which disdains method, the writer has said something of every thing that has the most distant relation to the Life and Writings of Mr. Pope. He has laid before the reader all the anecdotes, observations, and reflections, which offered themselves for that purpose. Perhaps he has called off the Reader's attention from the main subject, by a profusion of quotations, which occasion tautologies, to remark the pains that are taken to record what other people have said. Memory, like a coy female, has suffered herself to be wooed, but not to be compleatly won. By turning to the original authors, many errors are discoverable, though no very important ones. The Essay has, without design, all the negligence of conversation, instead of the correctness

ness of a classical performance. But this composition is not for the Learned, for they are above it; it is only for those who love to be amused, and are fonder of warm sentiments than of grammatical perfection. In the Summer season, the season when this was written, a green lane and a verdant track, no matter how much out of the way, are better than the turnpike road; and a little deviation to the right and to the left may give more delight to the fancy than the geometrical nearness of a strait line. The pleasure of the writer is to please the reader. He has no mercenary views. He "asks but the cheap reward of empty praise;" which if he cannot honestly obtain, it will be enough for him to hope to avoid censure for what he has written, and to offend no more.

not of a classical perfection. But
this composition is not only for
the sake of the subject, but is
also a work of the highest
order of art. The composition is
grammatical perfection. In the
next section, the section which is
written in a given language and a
certain manner, how much of the
work is better than the original
and is this division to the right
to the left, may give more delight
to the eye than the geometrical
figures of a machine. The pleasure
of the writer is to please the reader. He
has no other view. He asks
but in the effect of the phrase;
which if he cannot possibly obtain, it
will be enough for him to avoid
it. For the sake of the subject, and
to the end of the work.

A N

HISTORICAL RHAPSODY.

IF an art or invention is to be estimated and praised in proportion to the pleasure it communicates to mankind, the greatest thanks are certainly due to poetry and to poets. In vain were they ordered to be banished from the common-wealth of Plato. Little has their importance in the world been lessened by the degrading assertion, that the inventor of a wheelbarrow has done more service to mankind, than the writer of the Iliad and the Odyssæy. The great Newton has passed his censure in vain, in declaring, that, “after all, he could not help agreeing with his friend Dr. Barrow, that poetry was ingenious nonsense.” How inconsiderable are the number of the readers of Sir Isaac’s noblest performances, in comparison

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with

with those of the Rape of the Lock, the letter from Eloisa to Abelard, and the Essay on Man! It may be fairly confessed, that poetry is not an essential article in the commerce or support of life. It is only the treasure and delight of a few. Like gold, it can only belong to the fortunate, who can afford to keep it to themselves; but prose, like money in small change, is every moment necessary to carry on the ordinary affairs and general purposes of the world.

I availed myself of a recess during the heat of the summer, to give scope to my old inclination. What the Essay is good for, now it is finished, is not for the writer to decide. Perhaps it may be thought rather an effusion, than a composition. He did not know, when he took up the pen, whether it would be long or short. It was meant to be written from memory, with rapidity, and without taking down authors from their shelves. The pen has not written intentional falsehoods. Indeed, there can be no incitement, at this distance of time, and on the present subject, for corrupt partiality, or base malevolence,

malevolence, *quorum causas procul habeo*. This sketch proved too large for one sitting. The writer became more and more in love with his subject, and his pen ran away with him. He returned to it again, and again, and has compleated his intention. He has shewn it to some friends, who have not said enough against it to prevent its publication. It is now laid, very respectfully, at the feet of the public.

This ground is trodden so bare, that no verdure can easily spring up. What has been performed by the classical Hurd, the industrious Ruffhead, and those captivating writers, Warton and Johnson, can hardly admit or require to be added to. The last author comes to Biography with all the talents of Longinus and Quintilian, and with all the entertaining power of anecdote to enrich his volume. *Sero venientibus ossa*. It is lawful, according to one of the oldest customs and privileges in the world, to glean what one can, after the rich harvest of others.

No poet of our times or nation has laid us under so many obligations as Mr. Pope. - He has contributed highly to polish, to make more durable, and to fix the English language. But, a living language is incapable of being compleatly fixed. It is like the river in Horace, which never stands still, and, in the *representative versification* of the excellent Cowley, "which runs, and as it runs, for ever shall run on." He has done a great deal to improve our taste, and to correct our morals, as far as can be done by the magic of words. Nay, his satires are called the glorious supplement of our laws. The attraction of his poetry verifies the line of Herbert, "*a verse may catch him whom a sermon flies.*" It makes nothing against him, that from the moment our son of Apollo resolved to brandish his pen, he determined to dip it into Pactolus as well as Helicon.

Pope, as Lord Clarendon says of (the ever memorable) Hales of Eaton, was one of the least men in the kingdom; who adds of Chillingworth, that he was of a stature little superior to him; and, that it was an age,
in

in which there were many great and wonderful men of that size. Enough might be found of Pope's contemporaries, who were below the common standard, and whose talents of all kinds were equal to the most celebrated in the last century. But I have no desire to dignify a remark with examples of this sort, as the noble historian has done. Our Poet is Dick Distich, the president of the *little club*, in his own entertaining paper of the Guardian, and says jocosely of himself, that a spider is no ill emblem of him, and that he has been taken at a distance for a small windmill. He inherited his deformity from his father, who turns out at last, from the information of Mrs. Racket, his relation, to have been a linen-draper in the Strand. He was protuberant behind and before, in the words of his last biographer. But he carried a mind in his face, as a revered person once expressed himself of a singular countenance. He had a brilliant eye, which pervaded every thing at a glance. This disadvantageousness of figure he converted, as Lord Bacon expresses it, "into a perpetual

spur to rescue and deliver himself from scorn, and to watch the weakness of others, that he might have something to repay them." Some of his earliest opponents had the ill-natured rashness to exhibit "*the libell'd person and the pictur'd shape.*" Pope, who was tremblingly alive all o'er, returned this disingenuous attack, and made them pay dear for their personal abuse. He was as resentful of an imputation of the roundness of his back, as Marshal Luxemburg is reported to have been on the sarcasm of king William. Hay, in his Essay on Deformity, observes of himself, that he was the only deformed member of the House of Commons, that consists of 558 persons, yet had not that objected to him by his constituents: neither was he probably affronted on that account, in the House or out of it. The late Lord Temple could, through contempt or magnanimity, laugh at the ridicule of the libellers on the awkwardness of his figure. He had confessedly more dignity on his seat, than when he walked—*grace not in every step.* If there is any thing, said that good Englishman and great statesman,

man, in the House of Peers, in my person, that can be of service to the scribblers on the other side, and get them a dinner, they are heartily welcome to it. The supposed inadvertent imputation of Atterbury, of a crooked mind in a crooked body, could not be intended to reach the ears of Pope, nor descend to mark his character to the present age. What is dropped in the heat of talk, or even in momentary dislike, ought not to be remembered or reported.

Pope can hardly be said ever to have been a child, though he was all his life requiring the help necessary for one. We never have heard of his rattle nor his hobbyhorse. But then we know but little of him till he was about ten years old. Undoubtedly he was put to read and to write as early as the infirmities of his infancy permitted. He was able to understand and to translate from Ovid and Statius, as soon as he could be well supposed to construe those authors. Voltaire, that universal genius, wrote verses from twelve to eighty-four, as observes that animated traveller Sherlock. L'Enclos left him

a legacy for the prematurity of his poetry. He resembled (I am not sure that Voltaire does not somewhere apply this allusion) those trees that bear blossoms and fruit at the same time. His vein began to run as early, and flowed longer than any of the poetical tribe; though his rapid imagination (in the language of our great lexicographer), like the Peruvian torrent, when it brings down gold, mingled it with sand.

Pope wrote verses, such as are even still worth reading, as soon as Voltaire. | “ *He*
“ lisp’d in numbers, for the numbers came.”
 So did Cowley. His budding years, his love of reading, his passion for poetry, indulged and commended by his father, kept him at school, or under the parental roof at Binfield. Whilst he was under tuition at Hydepark-Corner, he grew enamoured of Ogilby’s Homer, on account of the story and the splendid engravings; and he warmed his fancy by going often to the playhouse, and acting a part in a play he had got up. He composed, while at his father’s, an epic poem, called Alcander, which he threw into
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the fire (with a tragedy and a comedy, according to Ruffhead) on the advice of Bishop Atterbury.

The first we hear of him is under the patronage of Sir William Trumbal, who had been Secretary of State to king William, and lived in his neighbourhood. His pastorals, composed at the age of sixteen, were his gentleman usher to introduce him to the acquaintance of the first men in the kingdom.

This species of composition, in which he equalled or surpassed every body else, was the last of his puerilities. To this melodious description of love, the seasons, and of fictitious manners, transcribed from his poetical predecessors, he was indebted for his first fame.

As it was precursory of his higher attempts, and perhaps necessary to them, what he has performed is not to be disrespected nor overlooked. *Me quoque dicunt vatem pastores, sed non ego credulus illis.* Sicily, according to that agreeable traveller Brydone, is as capable of bucolic poetry, as in the time of Theocritus, who was a native of Syracuse.

cuse. But, surely, the occupation of the cowherds, of the husbandmen, and the vine dressers, though you annex the sweetness of the Hyblean bees, and the melody of the birds in the fullness of song, will not compleat the image of perfect happiness; much less of the imaginary golden age, which, if it could have existence anywhere, would be destructive of the active faculties of mankind, as Lord Kaïms pronounces very justly in his sketches of human nature. For the horrors of Mount Ætna will possess the imagination, and the danger from robbers and assassins incline us to think a pastoral life, even in that region, not a very secure or happy one.

Pope was now a man, amongst men. A boy keeping company with men, will soon become a man himself. By the concurring advice and encouragement of his patrons, and all who knew him, he was preparing to sing the wrath of Peleu's son. He was brought where he might see the world, and the world might see him. He was yet so green in years, that Ambrose Philips, a pastoral

toral poet as well as himself, brought a birchen rod, for his correction, to Button's. He certainly had as little rubbish about him, as any man of his years, to use an expression of *Sir* Robert Walpole, on Mr. Legge. Having no profession to follow, he determined to commence a poet in form. He left no calling for the idle trade. In the course of his life he made or found opportunities to be also a good antiquarian, and to give some specimens of his knowledge in architecture, as Ruffhead informs us.

The admirable Hogarth, as appears by an entertaining pamphlet just put out by Mr. Nichols the printer, took the liberty to expose our Poet for this affectation of knowledge, in a print still in being, where Pope is represented as white-washing Lord Burlington's house and bespattering the Duke of Chandos, who is passing by. Hogarth wisely suppressed this publication. The story of Hipponax the poet, and Bupalus the painter, might reach his ears, before it was too late. He applied a little to drawing and portrait painting under Jervas: of his skill in drawing, an elegant

elegant specimen is preserved, of Rome in it's decay, with some fine subjects for moralizing, intervoven in the piece, which is prefixed to an edition of the Essay on Man. He painted a picture of Betterton, still in the possession of the Earl of Mansfield, for it was safe at his seat in Caen wood whilst the conflagration of June was destroying his furniture and library in Bloomsbury square, and that so effectually, that in the house of Peers he assured the Lords, he did not tell the law from the authority of books—for “ God knows,” says that great man, in an affecting strain of eloquence, “ I have not a book left !”

Pope acquired a stock of Latin and Greek very early, which a moderate application enabled him to enlarge. He had a sufficiency of knowledge from books, and not too much, “ If I had read as many volumes as you have done, said old Hobbes to a notorious book-worm, I should have been as ignorant as you are.” “ You must have read, said a great Personage in his library to our English philologer, more books than any man in the kingdom.”

kingdom." "No, Sir—Dr. Warburton has read more. I have passed a great part of my life in observation and meditation." It is marvellous that Pope was able to peruse so many books and to write so many, during his life, though it was not a very short one, considering his infirmities and the continual pain in his head, the region where wit and fancy are generated. Surely, he did not get some friend to read for him, as his learned commentator acknowledges he did, to save him from unnecessary fatigue? or, had he the learned eye of Magliabechi, to know what was in a book by its title, the heads of the chapters, and the Index? He had the gift of so broad and sound an understanding, that, like the Tuscan order of building, it was strong enough to bear any superstructure. His reading was pursued, in the different stages of his life, for amusement and for improvement. His translation of Homer abstracted him, in a great measure, from much conversation, for several years, and confined him to the cultivation of a dead language, and to English versification. Lord Lyttelton
puts

puts it into the mouth of Boileau to observe to Pope, that a great Poet, so tied down to so tedious a translation as that of Homer, "*is a Columbus chained to an Oar*;" and, that the editorship of Shakspeare (which Pope afterward undertook with more profit than reputation) was below him, and that his mind was unfit for the drudgery it requires. Not that the first employment was without it's pleasant hours. He who travels with Homer will see men and manners courting his observation, different from what he has been used to, will experience warmer climates and brighter skies, rivers, arts, and arms, foreign from modern European scenes and fashions, with which he may contrast them, and, if he is not in a hurry to return to his own fire-side and to old conversations, he must come back much entertained and instructed.

"Ubi amatur, non laboratur,

"Et si laboratur, labor amatur."

He knew his reward in money and reputation would be considerable. The translation of Homer was the largest and greatest labour
of

of his life. It filled up his longest days and his longest nights. He now had leisure to fit up and to adorn his villa at Twickenham. He converted an excavation, under the road into his Garden, into a Grotto, towards which the prince of Wales contributed some ornaments, Dr. Borlase, the great naturalist of Cornwall, and, as appears from some letters lately published, Sir Hans Sloane. He had now the completion of his political wish, "to read what books and see what friends I please." In the year 1726, Pope had like to have been drowned in returning in a dark night from Dawley to Twickenham in Lord Bolingbroke's coach and six, which was overturned in a piece of water. He was saved by the activity of the postilion, who broke the glass to get him out. Pope lost the use of two of the fingers of his left hand, and was under the care of Arbuthnot and St. André. So near was the public being deprived of his precious life! The philosopher, says the excellent Hurd, talks without experience, the man of the world without principle. Pope became qualified as much as any man to under-

understand, as well as to catch, the manners living as they rise. What he could only know in the abstract at Binfield (to hold an expression of the logicians), he knew in the concrete at Twickenham. He there saw the moral scenes of life passing in review before his mind, as exactly as the beautiful objects on his river Thames, from his camera obscura. He undoubtedly got a great deal of knowledge by his ear, in which nothing was ever lost; as well as by his eye. Every body was glad to bring or give him information. He was acquainted with the great men of both sides. For as yet his poetry was of no party. Horace and Virgil kept not higher company than Pope did or might have done—"who once refused the visit of a queen." If there was any thing of which he was totally ignorant, it was his own fault. For he stamped Lord Bolingbroke, his guide, philosopher, and friend, with a sort of omniscience; and says, that Warburton understood, though the only man in the world, as much as he. Yet, with all the advantages Pope enjoyed, his judgement on men is said sometimes to have de-

deceived him. Guthrie, the historian, of Tindal, confesses, that he had the greatest opportunities of knowing mankind; but, *out with it!* he was a bad judge of them. In the latter part of his life, he seems to have confined himself to the men of opposition (for parties ran so high, that there was no neutrality in the nation); who met occasionally at his house, to concert their measures. We know his associates, for he describes them to be,

Chiefs out of war, and statesmen out of place.

It is worthy of observation, that there is no mention made of Mr. Pitt, though he had begun his career of eloquence and popularity. Lord Cobham, his uncle, who had his regiment taken from him about this time by Sir Robert Walpole, he praises lavishly. Pitt was in the highest opposition to the Minister, with Pulteney, Lyttelton, and Barnard, that prejudice or patriotism could inspire, and Pope chose to commend them with all a poet's power. Pope is called, by Mr. Horace Walpole, the Inquisitor General. It may with truth be asserted, that there was no man who was not

afraid of the lash of his pen, or who dared to set him at defiance. Every body apprehended it might be his own turn next. He kept the whole kingdom in awe of him; as Delany asserts, that Swift did the kingdom of Ireland. Hear him in the frenzy and prodigality of vanity declare,

Yes, I am proud to see

Men, not afraid of God, afraid of me.

Paint to your imagination this diminutive and helpless mortal, requiring female assistance to raise him up in his bed; observe him sitting there, with his implements of writing placed about him, culling of phrases, and sorting of rhimes; committing every thing to paper that occurred in the conversation of the day; all the impressions of memory, and the roving of fancy, to adorn and create subjects for his poetry; whilst others slumbered and slept. Mr. Locke's advice, and his own sagacity, taught him to record his chance thoughts, which may be of the best sort, lest they should be lost, and never return again. His dictates and decrees from Twickenham had the effect of the letters *de cachet* of the
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tyrannical Tiberius, dated from Caprea, which struck an universal panic, and became proscriptions of all whom he was afraid of, or were become afraid of him.

English history remarks, that it might seem wonderful, the world was so much in terror of Queen Elizabeth, an insignificant woman, without dignity, crooked in her person, and without teeth. But the fact is so. She governed, like Jupiter, by her nod; a despotism, mankind would now be more likely to laugh at, than to obey. I am not certain that Lord Chatham would not have been able to conquer America (and his last declarations were to enter the lists with her for that purpose) *with his crutch*, if he would seriously have set about it, with opinion on his side, that governs every thing.

If this performance regarded method, it ought to have been mentioned sooner, that Pope quitted Binfield in 1716, having completed his purchase at Twickenham. Respectful curiosity always delights to trace a great man through his changes of place and fortune. Mr. Melmoth, to whom this writer

introduced himself at Bath in April, tells us, in Fitzosborne's letters, that he visited the house in Windsor Forrest, "where Pope spent the earliest part of his youth, which recalled to his mind the juvenile poet, and his first patrons, who *used to bless the roof.*" All pilgrimage to Binfield is now at an end, for the house is reported to be pulled down. Dr. Middleton, in his letter from Rome, acknowledges, that he amused himself with the thoughts of taking a turn where Cicero and his friends had held their *philosophical disputations*, or standing on that very spot where he had delivered some of his *famous orations*. Binfield could easily afford as many agreeable reflections to the imagination of a Melmoth. The house and grotto at Twickenham will awaken the most sluggish memory, and keep alive the idea of the poetical founder. There is no passing through the cloysters of Magdalen College, in Oxford, without casting an eye up to the study-window of Mr. Addison, from whence his genius first displayed itself. A leaf of bays, transmitted from the tomb of Virgil, at Naples, and preserved

served in the desk upon which this Essay is written, would alone be sufficient to prevent the Roman Poet from fading on the memory. *Sed carmina major imago.* Let Pope inform my reader of his removal from Binfield to Twickenham, from a letter of Dec. 2, 1718. "The history of my transplantation and settlement, which you request, would require a volume, were I to enumerate the many projects, difficulties, vicissitudes, and various fates attending that important part of my life: much more, should I describe the many draughts, elevations, profiles, perspectives, &c. of every palace and garden proposed, intended, and happily raised, by the strength of that faculty, wherein all great geniuses excel, Imagination. At last, the Gods have fixed me on the borders of the Thames, in the districts of Richmond and Twickenham. It is here I have passed an entire year of my life. One, that has once been a poet, was degraded to a translator, and at last, through meer dullness, is turned to an architect." Ruffhead acquaints us, that Pope intended his villa for Mr. Murray, now Earl of Mans-

field, upon the easiest terms. Let the traveller continue to visit the reputed birth-house of our immortal Shakspeare. I have no desire to injure popular belief, nor future jubilees at Stratford, nor a scene of theatrical representation. But, an Oxford friend, old, learned, and orthodox enough for a mitre, (*of Maudlin's learned grove*) assured me that conversing many years ago with the minister of the town, who, from his own retrospective knowledge, and his best inquiries, which included more than an hundred years, was able to give some account, induced him to conclude, that the wrong house was pitched upon for the birth place of our great dramatic poet. Should it be asked, if this is a proof against a received opinion? I think not: let it then be treated, as hearsay of hearsay, and afford an opportunity of ridiculing this sort of evidence in the humorous lines of Prior, in his Turtle and Sparrow,

— an honest Rook

Told it a Snipe, who told a Steer,
Who told it those, who told it her.

I

To

To return from this digression. When Dryden left off the poetical trade, Pope took it up. Dr. Beattie, in his Essay on Poetry and Music, balances the merits of Dryden and Pope: allows more originality to Dryden, but thinks the professed, happy, imitative powers of Pope put him upon a level. This critic asserts, that Pope's numbers are sweet, but elaborate; and our sense of their energy is in some degree interrupted by an attention to the art displayed in their texture: and that his style may be thought to have less simplicity, less vivacity, and less of the purity of the mother tongue; but that it is at the same time more uniformly elevated; and less debased by vulgarism, than that of his great master.

Pope was not, like Dryden, the servant of a Tonson. But his integrity received a blow from an *honest printer*, after his death. He never was in a hurry to publish, nor, as he describes a distressed poet, to print,

before term ends,

Oblig'd by hunger, and request of friends.

In the opinion of a good judge, the elegant translator of Pliny and Cicero's Letters,

and the author of those of Fitzosborne, from which last performance the following quotation is made: "Mr. Pope seems to have raised our numbers to the highest possible perfection of strength and harmony: and, I fear, all the praise that the best succeeding poets can expect, as to their versification, will be, that they have happily imitated his manner." And in another place he observes, in our poet's commendation, that what has been said of a celebrated French translator may be applied to Mr. Pope, that, "it is doubtful, whether the dead or the living are most obliged to him." May it not be affirmed as truly of Pope's poetry, as of Dryden's by Congreve, that, "take his verses, and divest them of their rhimes, disjoint their numbers, transpose their expressions, make what arrangement and disposition you please of his words, yet shall there eternally be poetry, and something which will be found incapable of being resolved into absolute prose? Shenstone praises Young, for bringing thoughts from their lurking-places and most secret recesses. Pope certainly deserves as much applause for

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comprising and condensing more sense into one line, than ever had been done before. Dean Swift thus happily expresses this faculty of his friend :

“ In Pope I cannot read a line
But with a sigh, I wish it mine ;
When he can in one couplet fix
More sense than I can do in six.”

Our poetry, which was drawn by the lesser and greater artists to French wire, an allusion of Lord Roscommon, Pope converts into English sterling. His expressions have the merit of Proverbs, and become maxims of morality (I do not say that an ethic system may be drawn from his works, as may be done from Shakspeare's) for every body to get by heart. Though he had so good an ear for poetical harmony, he had no passion for music. Milton knew it scientifically and practically. The organ was a principal amusement after he lost his sight. Pope could not have found time to have been great in poetry, painting, and music. Buonancini set his ode, and choruses, in the tragedy of Brutus, to music, which were performed at Cannons.

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He could hardly believe the reality of what people affected to feel from Handel's grand compositions (as great as his Orpheus produces in his St. Cecilian Ode), till he consulted Arbuthnot, who assured him of the vast powers of Handel. "I cannot help it, says Pope, according to the Biographia, at Lord Burlington's, where he often saw Handel, but what I hear, pleases me no more than the airs of a common ballad!" It is surprizing that Pope, who was bred up in the most religious of all religions, if the expression is admissible, should be off his guard, and burlesque the first Psalm; for which Blackmore, of pious and unpoetical memory, reproved him, and got for his pains a *niche* in the Dunciad, Some stanzas in one of his youthful letters border upon immodesty. But gallantry prevents a criticism on the last line of the second Canto of the Rape of the Lock.

All reformers should be better than other men. But it often happens, that many a verse and prose man who has no character of his own to lose, attempts, without the excuse of provocation, to take away that of another." The
hand

hand that cannot raise a hovel, may be impious enough to demolish a temple," says a living author. This is not meant to be applied to Pope. He had a reputation to lose, and did not imagine, when he made his enemy less, he became bigger himself. He generally put his name to his writings of the satyrical cast; and, as Dr. Brown expresses it in a printed letter to our accomplished Lord of London, "had a name to put."—Pope, at one time, must have been upon the best terms of friendship with Lady Wortley, for he addresses several complimentary stanzas to her: and he used to be frequently in the company of Lord Hervey. It is well known, that they afterwards quarrelled, and wrote and said the cruellest things of one another they could think of; for friendship with wits of different principles is very subject to mortality; Lady Wortley assisted in a satire against Pope, (*Hard as thy heart, and as thy birth obscure*, is one of the bitter lines); and she calls him, what she had done a thousand times before, the wicked wasp of Twickenham, in her entertaining letters from the East. The benevolent

volent Archbishop Herring, in his correspondence with Mr. Duncombe, writes, that if it must be admitted that Pope deserves to go by the name of a wasp, he has a title to that of a bee. Lord Hervey, a man of great accomplishments and resentments, was ardent to engage in the war of satire against Pope, and thought himself a match for him. Bishop Hoadly, his friend, and also the never-to-be-forgotten champion of civil and religious liberty, dissuaded him from contending with a person whose trade was to scold and to bespatter, and applied to him, successfully, a ludicrous night adventure, though not a cleanly one, of Mr. Pate, the learned wool-lendrapier. Pope does not seem to have wanted courage to have satisfied Lord Hervey by a duel, if that is the meaning of his "being at home, if called upon." Not surely with a sword, with which weapon Pulteney and Hervey had lately contended. It ended, on Pope's side, with his opposing his antagonist with the point of his pen, "Satire's my weapon," says our hero. This was sport to the multitude; but the nobleman called in

in pride and contempt for his auxiliaries, and does not confess himself hurt by his enemy. He stooped, according to the talk of the town, so low, as to relate, that Pope was used to go about to his friends, to beseech them to give him a little sense, in order to support him from day to day, for that he had very little of his own. "So violent did I find parties in London," says Voltaire, in his Letters on the English nation, "that I was assured by several, that the Duke of Marlborough was a coward, and Mr. Pope a fool." Hervey took occasion to ridicule Pope, for his perpetual boast of the number of his friends, and of every trifle relative to himself. It is certain, that no man, except old Montaigne and Sir William Temple, talks so much about himself, through all his writings, in verse, as well as in prose. However tiresome or impertinent it might seem to his enemies, it was grateful to his friends. It was having his story from his own mouth. He does not value himself so much upon his faults and his failings, as the Gascon, and perhaps had not so many of which he would have boasted.

But

But he publishes, in larger than capital letters, his independence of fortune and spirit, his hatred and despight of fools, his love of his country, and his esteem of good men. Was the world the better for his satire? If he was not able to make it better, like the pulpit orator against vice, he prevented it from becoming worse.

To mend the world's a vast design!

says the author of that original Poem the Spleen. He threatens Hervey, that,

—whilst he breathes, no rich nor noble knave
Shall walk the world in credit to the grave.

At the desire of Queen Caroline, he kept back the long prose letter of Lord Hervey, now inserted in his works, for she became apprehensive it might make her Counsellor, so he is described, “Now at the ear of
“Eve, familiar toad,” insignificant in the public esteem, and at last in her own.

Lord Chesterfield tells his son, that he never was in company with Addison or Pope, but he rose up a better man, and set a higher value upon himself.—Why did
Pope

Pope deal so much in satire? Let him answer for himself:

Ask you what provocation I have had?

The strong antipathy of good to bad.

Besides; every body loves to hear every body abused, says somebody. As this observation may seem to be tinged with the spirit of Rochefoucault, whose Maxims Warburton truly pronounces to be the entertainment of the idle, the envious, and the worthless part of mankind, it shall be assigned to nobody. He found, as may always be found, if looked for, vice, folly, and villainy, skulking about, or triumphant, in high places, as well as in lower ones, for the pastime and vengeance of his pen. "*Fools rush into my head, and so I write,*" says our satirist. It may be some doubt (I believe Bayle has sentiments of this kind in his Essay on Defamatory Libels) in the eye of morality, whether the purchaser of a satirical libel does not share in the guilt of the author; and whether the pleasure in reading it is not of a criminal sort, and a proof of the malignity of human nature. There would be no thieves nor stolen goods,

goods, experience tells us, if there were no receivers; and no scurrilous writings, nor libellous prints, would be published, to corrupt the ear, nor to gratify the impudence of the eye, if there were no purchasers. Atterbury approved so highly of the character of Atticus, for which Addison was made to fit, that he advised Pope to go on, now he had found out which way his genius pointed. But Arbuthnot, with his dying breath, desired him to be less severe, *to reform, and not to chastise*; and, to paraphrase his meaning, to laugh only at folly; and to be content to put vice out of countenance with Horace, rather than to stab like Juvenal. He was preparing for Euthanasia when he wrote this letter. Pope returned him for answer, that he differed with him in opinion in his mode of correcting the world, and that he must go on his own way, for the vice and the man were inseparable. Yet, in the advertisement to his satire, addressed to Arbuthnot, he tells the reader, it was owing to his friend's intreaties, he did not make so free with the names of his enemies as they had done with his.

There

There are few fictitious names in Pope : none perhaps that the reader cannot apply to the right owners. It is observed, that in the *Dunciad*, he often only gave the initial letter : but the next edition ventured upon the name at full length. Swift, in his *Verses on his own Death*, pretends he did not deal in personal abuse. *Credat Judæus Apella, non ego.* The ensuing quotation breathes so much humanity, and wants nothing but truth to recommend it, that it is worth the attention of future satirists :

- “ Yet malice never was his aim,
- “ He lash’d the vice, but spar’d the name :
- “ His satire points at no defect,
- “ But what all mortals may correct.”

If Pope’s temper had not led him to personality, the observation of Cleland (whom he describes as a man of sense and of integrity and, to be very parenthetical, who was the Will Honeycomb of the *Spectator*’s club), in a letter to him, “ *that all such writings and discourses as touch no man, will mend no man,*” might have given the bias to his pen. The personalities in his satires multiplied the sale.

The portraits of Sporus, Bufo, Clodius, Timon, and Atossa, were purchased by every body. When he made a declaration, respecting the characters of one of his best performances, that no real persons were intended, it checked the reader and the edition. The public would not embrace a cloud for Juno. When he had his enemies in his power, he did not spare them. He received many letters from those who had offended him, containing either protestations of innocence, or imploring pardon. But justice was to be satisfied. If there is not too much pomp in the allusion, may it not be said, that Pope, when he got his enemies at his feet, behaved as the tyrannicides of Kouli Kan, who followed their words up with blows, and, whilst they were dispatching him, cried out, "You have shewn no mercy; and you shall have no mercy!"

Many of those who affected to be less hurt, carried their concealed wounds to the grave. Even those who wanted to put on a laugh, or, like Cibber, undertook to reply, and resolved to have the last word, generally

came

came off with the worst ; and had no reason, in the Warburtonian language, to be pleased with their situation in the long run. Even the posterity of those he dragged before his tribunal, still read his poetry with some pain, and would expunge the peccant passages. Their punishment and disgrace remain on a record as indelible as on adamant, though their delinquency does not appear. Like the spot of blood on Lady Macbeth, the words cannot be *washed away*. The version of Homer, according to our last critic, became, after a little practice, less difficult ; and he gives reasons to prove the translator able to do justice to the great original, and defends the mode of his translation. Pope set himself a poetical task, to translate, on an average, so many lines a day—like the navigator, who reckons his vessel will compleat her voyage at a set time, if she continues to sail at so many knots an hour, unobstructed by storms or calms. Lyttelton (as yet without a title, asked Pope one morning, how he had slept during the night ? “ I have not had a wink of sleep, says our poet ; but I have fared as

well, for I have translated forty lines of Homer." Lyttelton (now ennobled) thinks the translation performed, not so much in the *manner* of Homer, nor agreeable to the *sense*, in all places, as might perhaps be desired.

Mr. Stockdale affirms, "that every impartial judge must allow, that Pope in general excels his original, in propriety, in beauty, and in fire; and, in short, that he improved on Homer; and justly pronounces, that if he had only favoured the world with his translation of the Iliad, it would have ranked him with our great and celebrated Poets." Pope was assisted by the living and the dead. He stood upon the shoulders of his predecessors, and he had literary pioneers to smooth the way for him. After all, Bentley pronounced the version to be Spondanus, and not Homer. "Some of those who do not wish me well (I quote from memory) says Pope, in a letter to Addison, when he was translating Homer, assert, that I do not understand Greek; but they have never examined me." It is handed about, that Lord
Mans-

Mansfield, perhaps about the time that *our* poet pleasantly observed, "How sweet an Ovid "Murray was our boast!" has said, "that if Mr. Pope was not at first so well acquainted with the language of his original, before he finished his translation, he became a thorough master of it." Bentley's opinion (which was rather stolen than given) came round to Pope, and occasioned all the flippancy of his pen, that shews itself so often, against that great critic and hyper-critic. Bentley is reported to have observed on Pope's publications, in this Woolsean egotism, "this man is always abusing *me* or *the king*." Except to the chosen few who can taste the flavour of the Greek dialects, our English Homer is preferable to the original, more read, better understood, and more admired. We are Trojans, and not Greeks. The present observer (he does not mean to be a libeller on the Greek language) approves of the idea of that judge of both languages, the critical and poetical Dr. Beattie, who recommends a literal English translation of the Iliad and Odyssey in prose, to preserve a juster notion

of the simplicity of ancient manners. If our great Orientalist could have found leisure to have afforded us only a prose version of the Persian Poet Ferdusi, the Homer of his country, it would have been a great acquisition to Poetry. We are in hopes, that he will give the public (and I hope the public will give him every thing he asks of it) a version of the *volumes, that are suspended in the Mosque at Mecca*, as Imlac calls them in *Rasselas*. A Lowth and a Jones have already exhibited beauties from the poetical treasures of the East, *that vie with Græcian or with Roman fame*. The translator of Fingal has not failed (if he has failed at all) in his version of the *Iliad*, for want of literature or abilities; for they are equal to any thing. But Ossian and Homer, though both of the profession of *Rhapsodists*, are thought to be very unlike. If the translator has pleased those he wished to please, he has not misemployed his time. May this pen be permitted to apply to him, without *Parnassian sneer*, a line intended for a royal character?

"It is to history he trusts for praise."

Pope,

Pope, when he had finished the Iliad, and his part of the Odyſſey (for, like Atlas, he got Hercules to bear now and then the weight of the poetical burden), did not give up the tuneful trade ; for he was certainly *born, for nothing but to write*. He ſpread the ingot of gold, from the mine of Bolingbroke (if there was any gold in the mine of his metaphysics), into ſuch rich poetical leaf, that, when we read the Eſſay on Man, we think only of the Poet, and not the purveyor of the philoſophy. He fitted the character of Horace, without the violence of Procuſtes, to Engliſh follies, and to contemporary knaves. Dr. Beattie ſays, his imitations equal their archetypes in elegance, and often ſurpaſs them in energy and fire. He was content to be an imitator, when he ceaſed being a tranſlator. He never ſcrupled to borrow (but ſure he ſeldom borrowed from neceſſity, as Warburton once gave it under his hand—*litera ſcripta manet*), knowing he was ſo well able to repay. No one can charge him with robbing and murdering at the ſame time. Ill-nature may trace his parodies and alluſions

through fifty authors. My friend Thompson (called from a particular composition *Sickness Thompson*) had the patience to read Hammond's Elegies, with Tibullus in his hand, and declared, there was hardly any thing in Hammond, which had not pre-existence in Tibullus. *Nil dictum, quod non dictum prius.* He interleaved Pope's works, as he said, to observe how much originality there was in them. He was an excellent classic scholar, and, next to the Wartons, I imagine, the greatest master of the English poets, both old and new. The admirers of Pope would not thank any body for detecting *petty larcenies of wit*, or proving too much against him. Thompson is gone; and, to say nothing of his writings, his common-place book probably followed him.

Pope is often beholden to Boileau, whose genius was formed upon the antients, and was as chaste as his own. I think there can be no proof, that he could not relish as well as read Boileau in French. And yet Voltaire has these words, "Pope, whom I was intimately acquainted with, could hardly

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ly read French ; spoke not one syllable of our language, not being capable of doing it." What must the reader think of the letter to Racine ? Voltaire has commended the poetry of Pope so warmly, in several parts of his works, that perhaps he no where means to traduce him, nor misrepresent him. Of Voltaire's opinion of some of Pope's poetry, take it in his own English words, from a letter of his in Warburton's edition. " For my part, I look upon his poem called the Essay on Criticism, as superior to the Art of poetry of Horace, and his Rape of the Lock is, in my opinion, above the Lutrín of Despreaux, I never saw so amiable an imagination, so gentle graces, so great variety, so much wit, and so refined knowledge of the world, as is in this little performance," Voltaire translated, in his Letters on the English Nation, a small part of the Rape of the Lock : so he did of Hudibras. He writes to Mr. Pope a spritely letter in English, on his accident in 1726, from Lord Bolingbroke's, at Dawley. This great Genius was two years in England, during which time he finished,

printed,

printed, and presented his *Henriade* to Queen Caroline. He composed an account of the Epic Poets in our language; wrote a short poem in English; attended our theatres; but oh! never to be forgiven nor forgot, by the bigots, to his dying day, with his tongue and his pen he misrepresented Shakespear!

No man ever had so many enemies as Pope, nor was so well able to defend himself against them. "I wish, says Balzac, quoted in the *spectator*, I could pile up a mountain of the stones that envy has flung at me." What the Dunces wrote against him he collected, and, if I am not misinformed, they were intended to have been preserved in bundles, in the *Musæum*. Whether they are to be found, or why they are not there, let the curious in such researches examine.

Here let us make a momentary pause, to ask, if dullness alone, unless superadded to malignity, is a sufficient cause of abhorrence and separation from the rest of the human species? Charles the Fifth desires Erasmus, in Fontenelle's *Dialogues*, to enquire, "what hindered him from being a stupidified

blockhead?" "It was nothing almost, says Charles: a small disposition of the fibres, or some slender matter which escapes the search of the most exact anatomy." Neither Pope nor Swift seem to have any compunction for the use or abuse of their wit, except in their harmless raillery on Vanbrugh and Addison. Yet Swift can say of himself,

*True, genuine dullness moved his pity,
Unless it offered to be witty.*

Swift pointed to an old oak, as he was walking with Dr. Young, and foretold, that he himself should begin to decay atop. If he had become one of his miserable Strulbrugs, soon after he wrote their history, his antagonists would have converted it into a judicial punishment.

The bathos, or the art of sinking in poetry, was the forerunner of the Dunciad. Pope, by his wanton conduct in that piece, provoked half the scribblers of the town, who pelted him from Grubstreet with their scurrilities from year to year, till he could either bear it no longer, or found he had collected raw materials enough to manufacture

facture into a mock heroic poem. It was presented to the king in 1728. But it is probable, it could hardly be understood or admired by the sovereign, who is known not to have loved poetry. Cibber tells Pope, it was a fine composition, but an indecent triumph over a parcel of poor creatures, that he ought to have been ashamed to contend with. Pope thought he had a right to revenge, and that he was doing a piece of service in setting a mark upon his enemies; for he says in one of his satires, he always found, *That each bad author is as bad a friend.*

The hint of the Dunciad is from Dryden's Mac Fleckno. It ruined authors with their booksellers, for nobody would buy what they wrote, and it kept the press in some awe, which is more than the laws can do at present. Pope offends in this poem too often against his own maxim, that,

Want of decency is want of sense.

Dr. Delany confesses, that his Dunciad degenerates to the lowest, and most indelicate imagery and filth. He says, that a friend asked Pope,

to

to whom he shewed the poem in manuscript, if he thought there was not something in the poem, that might give offence to persons that loved and honoured him, or lessen him in their esteem? To which Pope answered, *I cannot tell but there may.* Do you think that any of the passages I object to, will raise you in the esteem of any man living, whose esteem you honour? *I cannot say there is,* replied the poet.—And yet Pope paid no regard to this remonstrance, but defiled the pages of his satire, with *stercoraceous language*, which perhaps he learned from his friend Swift. Shall this pen extenuate this offence in the words of Ovid at confession, (with a softening of the first epithet)

Lasciva est nostra pagina, vita proba.

Cleland and Savage were called upon (by dedications and prefaces) to appear for Pope, when he did not care to record his own appearance, and served in the double capacity of friends and of spies. Savage collected together all the anecdotes of the heroes of the Dunciad, that make them ridiculous in the notes. His high birth, his distresses,
and

and his merit, made Pope his benefactor for life; and he contributed an annuity of fifty pounds a-year towards his support; but Savage irrecoverably lost the good opinion of Pope by his unconquerable arrogance, and he had the art of chilling the liberality of his warmest patrons. Two lines from the vanity of human wishes strike so forcibly upon my mind, that I must appropriate them, as descriptive of this unhappy man, the natural son of Earl Rivers,

“ Observe what ills the scholar’s life assail;
Pain, want, disease, a garret, and a jail !

Savage would have been forgot (for characters of ingratitude are not worth a memorial), if his friend, almost the only person he had not alienated himself from; and who, (as Archbishop Laud says of himself) “ never deserts, till he is first forsaken,” had not embalmed his memory in a masterpiece of Biography.

A new glaring meteor now began to shoot up its head, above the literary horizon. The name of this giant, was Warburton. The appellation of Colossus is not to be given any longer

longer, it having made ill blood between Dr. Brown and our late eminent Oxford Professor. This extraordinary man rose, from being a practising attorney at Newark, where his father was townclerk, to be Lord Bishop of Gloucester. Before he shook off the lay-habit, he surveyed all the arguments for and against Revelation, with great labour and impartiality, and wrote afterwards with sovereign contempt of free-thinkers and their cause. And yet, at one time, by the orthodox he was reckoned heterodox. He offered to enlist himself into the service of Pope, and was taken at his word. He introduced himself at Twickenham, with a vindication of the Essay on Man, in his hand, which poem was known all over Europe by French translations. His attempt was, to defend the system and confute Croufaz, a professor in Switzerland. Croufaz, it was said, made it tremble to its centre; but this defender of Pope's ethical faith endeavoured to prop it up. Dr. Middleton desires Warburton to advise Pope to be content with his explanation, and defend it with the arguments he has found

out

out. The more this metaphysical poem was surveyed, till the new commentator appeared, the more unsolid was its foundation thought to be. "It is more easy, says Mr. Wyndham, in his Tour through Wales, to destroy an hypothesis, than to support one." If Warburton had not come at the right hour, the system would never have been half so well understood. It could not have resisted the shock of time, and the fashion of new opinions. This champion preserved Pope from the sentence of condemnation. Dr. Trapp, a cold poet, but a warm and respectable critic, somewhere asserts, that, "Pope's discoveries in the moral world entitle him to as much applause, as Newton's in the physical one." If this observation is not to be found in his works (but, I think, I read it whilst at the university), let it be considered as a slip of memory, but not a perjury of the pen. Warburton became master of the spirit of Pope, and the director of his opinions, as long as he lived. He trusted him with writing notes on his works, of which he gave him the profits and the custody of his fame.

It

It became the wish of both, that they might go down hand in hand to posterity. What is a little singular, Warburton, amongst his earliest friends, who were Pope's enemies, had roughly and roundly asserted, that the Essay was collected "from the worst passages of the worst authors." This was either unknown to Pope, or forgot or forgiven. He who says a great deal, has always something to unsay. Richardson, the younger, asserts, "that Pope never dreamt of the scheme he afterward adopted, and that he was afraid of the imputation of fatalism and deism. The Optimist in Voltaire is a banter on Pope's, or rather Leibnitz's position, *Whatever is, is right*. This (relative to Pope) Richardson says, is of his own knowledge, and that he was privy to this Essay, from the first scratches, to the last laboured manuscript in printed characters, which Pope gave him, on account of his trouble, in collation. But, the Commentary made the Poem considered as pious and philosophical. Poetical, at least enough so, it had been generally allowed. Had the great Warburton changed his opi-

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nion,

nion, or was it altered by interest? No matter; perhaps he was right at last. But surely friendship may corrupt the head, as certainly as money corrupt the heart. Of the *Essay on Criticism*, which, Warton says, he has reason to believe, was first written in prose (according to a precept of Vida to his pupil), Pope's friend Richardson pronounces, that Pope always spoke of it as an irregular collection of thoughts, thrown together, as they offered themselves, as Horace's *Art of Poetry* was, and written in imitation of that irregularity, which he even admired, and said was beautiful. But Warburton, a Columbus in criticism, taught Pope a better lesson;

*For learned commentators view,
In Homer, more than Homer knew.*

In answer to a question proposed more than twenty years ago, in the *Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope*, What is there transcendently pathetic or sublime in Pope? Mr. Stockdale, an admirer of our Poet, only on this side idolatry, thus replies: "Many passages

passages throughout his works; his filial apostrophe to the age and infirmities of an affectionate mother—his Elegy to the Memory of an unfortunate Lady—his Prologue to Cato—his Eloisa to Abelard (which, Beattie says, is beyond all comparison more sublime and more interesting than any of Ovid's Letter-writing Ladies), are all transcendently *pathetic*; and asserts, that a summer's-day would elapse before we could read all that is transcendently *sublime* in Pope." If Dr. Warton could have foreseen that he should have been called to such severe account, he would perhaps have couched his question in terms more guarded. It must be confessed, though the two editions of his book found purchasers, yet he brought over but few of his readers to his opinion. But no reviewer of the subject became so personal as this champion, though Ruffhead is not inclined to shew him much mercy. Another volume of the Essay is eagerly expected in the course of this literary season, notwithstanding the impetuosity of the last piece of criticism.

Pope refused a degree of Doctor of Laws, from the university of Oxford, during a visit there, because they would not confer the same honour on his *new* favourite, who, it must be confessed, was to them a *new man*.

Pope had such a melody of voice, that, according to Lord Orrery, honest Tom Southern christened him, "the little nightingale." I was told the other day, he was called, for the time, "Wycherley's Crutch;" alluding either to the different sizes of their persons, or the support that Pope was giving to an edition of the other's poems. A friend, since dead, had an opportunity of passing much time at the late Lord Radnor's at Twickenham about the year 1740, where Pope, who was his neighbour, often visited, because he could have his own way, sick or well, and where every thing was made convenient to him: where nobody was admitted whom he did not love, or who did not love him, to use part of an epistolary invitation of Pulteney to the Dean of St. Patrick. He used to say, that Pope's conversation was of the most agreeable kind, and that, in his
judge-

judgement, it was impossible to change one word for the better, in the course of the longest conference. His table-talk became a banquet for the next day, as Plutarch records of some eminent person. But this orator, for such he was, if true eloquence consists, not in elocution, but in saying what is proper on the occasion, displayed himself to more advantage in the closet than in the senate; he made but a poor appearance in the House of Lords: he was afraid of saying too much or too little, and thought (like Addison, in the House of Commons) he had more to lose, than to get there. He owns, that he had but ten words to utter, and he made two blunders in them. Pope had been summoned by Atterbury to give some account how he passed his time at Bromley, who hoped his poetical friend would describe him as more occupied in poetry than treason. Pope, who was by no means a lute in the house, became a trumpet out of it. He appealed, like a tribune, to the people, for him. He plucked up courage when it was

too late thus publickly to acknowledge his intimacy with the prelate,

“ *How pleasing Atterbury's softer hour !*

“ *How shone the soul unconquer'd in the Tow'r !*

and, in another place, alludes to the injustice of his banishment.

There are not many ardent expressions, traditionary or otherwise, and what are called *bon mots*, of Mr. Pope. (If the remark is not impertinent in this place, I recollect that Cowley asserts, “that Cromwell did not leave behind him the memory of one wise or witty apophthegm, even amongst his domestic servants or greatest flatterers.”) Our poet chose perhaps rather to write on marble, than to trust to the evanescence of memory, and, to use the phrase and advice of Mr. Foote, the late great master and actor, in the low comedy, *to bottle up his wit*. The last critic and biographer of our poet (who writes for his readers, in the compliment of the impartial Dr. Kippis, with the reflections and observations of a Plutarch and a Tacitus) recollects but a single repartee. A second shall be exhibited from Ruffhead, in the virtuoso lan-

language, *in good preservation*. The late prince of Wales honoured Pope with a visit at Twickenham, who, on his expressing the most dutiful professions of attachment, gave his Royal Highness an opportunity of observing, very shrewdly, that, *his love to princes was inconsistent with his dislike of kings, since princes may in time be kings*. “Sir, replies Pope, I consider royalty, under that noble and authorized type of a Lion. Whilst he is young, and before his nails are grown, he may be approached and caressed with safety and pleasure.” Pope was as excellent in prose as in verse. By habit, he says, it became as easy to express his thoughts in one mode, as the other. The reports of the *Improvisatori* poets would be incredible, if observation had not verified them. A few seasons ago, there was an Italian Rhapsodist in London; who, as I am told, made excellent extempore verses on every subject that was proposed to him. Art and Nature can do wonders together. The style of Pope’s essays and letters is the properest in the world. The Essay on Shakspeare is so perfect (*that on Homer is not*

less so) that our classical editor of that dramatic writer confessed to his friends, that "his preface stood in his way, and made him loth to put pen to paper." Pope, like Dryden, never let his prose break-in upon his verse; nor his verse upon his prose. He laid down plans for more publications, if death, who confounds the projects of poets and politicians, had not defeated them. The outlines of the heroic poem of Brutus has been seen in the hand-writing of Lord Lyttelton. Upon what grounds this is asserted is now forgot, for the informant is no more. It was said, that it was presented to Dr. Brown, who afterwards became better known as the Estimator of the manners and principles of the times, with the supposition he would take the epic pen, and erect it into a poem. But he was not a man to pace in another's trammels. As Pope has been called, with Boileau, the Poet of reason, there is no doubt he would have fraught his poem of Brutus with wisdom, and embellished it with all the charms of expression, even though fancy might not be confessed to predominate. Why should

not

not the epigrammatic couplet he uttered upon Thompson the physician, whom he discharged, then in every body's mouth, be admitted to be his, and inserted accordingly :

“ Dunces, adieu ! forgive offences past !

Thompson the dunce has kill'd your foe
at last.”

Notwithstanding the opinion of Voltaire has been adduced on the merit of some of Mr. Pope's compositions, the reader who has not opened many volumes will not be displeased to know the sentiments of Dr. Beattie and Bishop Berkley. If this be thought in some measure to be writing one book from another, the trouble belongs to the transcriber more than to the peruser, to whom it affords more variety of entertainment. On these topics, authorities may please better than arguments. In the Rape of the Lock, says Beattie, “ Pope outshines Boileau as much as the Sylphs that flutter round Belinda exceed in spriteliness and luminous beauty these mechanical attendants of the goddesses of Luxury, who knead up plumpness for the chin, and pound vermilion for the cheek of the monk.” Lord

Kaims

Kaims thinks this poem the most perfect in the English language. Dean Berkley writes in early days, in these words, from Leghorn, to Mr. Pope: "I have accidentally met with your Rape of the Lock here, having never seen it before. Style, painting, judgement, spirit, I have already admired in other of your writings: but, in this, I am charmed with the magic of your invention (the only faculty of Pope in dispute with the critics), with all those images, allusions, and inexplicable beauties you raise so surprizingly, and at the same time so naturally, out of a trifle." Before the insertion of the machinery (which was added a year after) Addison pronounced it to be (in the words of Lucretius) *merum fal.* The Sylphs and the Gnomes were as much the talk of the town (I may add, they were the Deities of the day) as the monsters in Gulliver's Travels, so vastly little and so vastly big, as a certain class of readers denominate them. A Sylph is a more useful and benevolent being than even Swift's favourite Houyhnhnms. As I perhaps shall never have another opportunity of mentioning

ing the name of Berkley, who is praised by Pope for *every virtue under heaven*, I crave the reader's indulgence for a moment. Every body knows Berkley was a philosopher, a traveller, and a bishop. But it is on account of his being a poet and a prophet, that his name is made use of here. He was the author of a single poem, that stands, like a column, by itself, and wants no support, in six stanzas, which contain some of his good sense, in verses not very excellent. They were written at Rhode Island, in America, about the year 1726, where he arrived, having missed Bermudas, in the Atlantic Ocean, whither he intended his romantic voyage. The last stanza contains something very *prophetic*, and is making too rapid haste to be fulfilled. As an Englishman, the pen trembles in my hand whilst I am giving it to my less informed readers :

*“ Westward the course of empire takes its way;
The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama of the day :
Time's noblest offspring is the last.”*

Let

Let us change the scene from America to Twickenham.—All Pope's poetry is not equally correct and interesting. His collection of epitaphs, perhaps the meanest of his performances, has fared but indifferently, from the late severity of criticism. But two of the lines on Craggs are so much to the honour of a secretary of state and of the particular statesman, that it is a pleasure to introduce them here :

*Who broke no promise, serv'd no private end,
Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend.*

It is difficult to be a good man and a great public character. Old Whiston says, in his own Biography, that Lord Stanhope confessed to him, that "it was impossible for a minister of state to be an honest man." Surely, he gave himself a bad character : or perhaps he was not in earnest. He lived with the reputation of a disinterested and uncorrupt minister ; and when he died, his sovereign retired to shed tears for his loss. Let us recollect the ending of a line in Pope, which points—"to Stanhope's noble flame :"
and then turn from Rysback's sepulchral figure
of

of him, in Westminster Abbey, to Craggs's monument, and advert to the couplet just quoted.

There are, there certainly were, in the first editions, a great number of feeble lines, and of indifferent rhymes (hardly ever the case with Swift), and now and then an ungrammaticism; for the English Grammar of Dr. Lowth exhibits several. They who are at the trouble of separating the chaff from the wheat, may have the first for their pains. But Pope never creeps for a hundred lines together, as Dryden meanly asserts of Milton, His Pegasus, now and then, seems to want a spur more than a bridle. I have seen it lately in print, that there have been several who have versified as well as Pope. But language is but the dress of thought, and one is as inferior to the other, as the body is to the mind. Perhaps even an admirer of Pope may acknowledge, he was as much the poet of art as of nature: Both had claims upon him, and he upon both. Tragedy and Comedy struggle hard for their favourite Garrick, in the well-known picture of Sir Joshua

Barclay

Reynolds

Reynolds (who is a master of the pen as well as the pencil); for, who had the greatest right to him remains undetermined. Pope certainly shines by a borrowed, as well as by a native light. The diamond is indebted for its lustre to the hand of the jeweller, though it owes its parentage and growth to the mine and to the sun. "His faults, says the amiable Spence, are the faults of a man, but his beauties are the beauties of an angel."

His Essay on Criticism did not sell till he put his name to it (a practice recommended by the trade, at this time, to the sale of all slender publications), as his catholic bookseller in Russel Street informed one of the best scholars of the age. His works sustained much alteration and variation, both of insertion and deletion, and the change is always for the better. His manuscript of the Essay on Man, which was purchased by Dr. Chauncy, a great and expensive collector of curiosities, written, as has been hinted, in printed characters, which he affected from his first ardour of imitation, shews the improvement and burnish he chose to bestow upon it. I had

had forgot to observe, that Pope thought himself obliged to defend his Essay, in a letter to Racine, in 1742, against a charge of some pernicious notions to be found there.

“ His notions, he asserts, are diametrically opposite to the sentiments of Spinoza and Leibnitz, and perfectly coincident with the tenets of Pascal and Fenelon.”

It was expected that Warburton would have written his life, for he promised it; and that his executors would have published some of his posthumous pieces. The sweepings of the study of a great Genius ought to be thrown into the grave with him. In both those hopes the eager met with a disappointment. What could give rise to the expectation of finding a satirical life of Dean Swift, in manuscript, by Pope, is not yet perhaps too late to enquire into, for two of his noble executors are still living. The last letters that pass between our Poet and the Dean express the most serious and solemn veneration for each other. It was not easy for honest biography to shew itself, when Pope's ashes were hardly cold. And yet, a Mr. Ayre
scrupled

scrupled not to write an account of him immediately, in two octavo volumes.

Warburton was entangled by late friendships, *et recentibus odiis*. His prospect of elevation in the church, where he was afterward recompensed with a mitre by the interest of Lord Chatham, made him every day too great for his subject. He did nothing on this occasion; but thirty years afterwards he assisted Ruffhead with some biographical materials, and revised the life, as written by his locum-tenens, sheet by sheet. Every great man, and some to swell their own importance, sought the acquaintance and friendship of our poet. England had reason to value herself upon having so great a bard. Foreigners and strangers made all possible enquiries after him. Every body would have gone to Twickenham, "to stop the chariot, and to board the barge," in order to visit him. A countryman went to Rome on purpose to get a sight of Livy. But our modest son of the Muses was, at no time of his life,

"Smit with the mighty pleasure to be seen."

Statesmen

Statesmen of every denomination, especially since the Hanover Accession, offered to provide for him, and to enable him to enjoy the accommodation of a carriage ; for a chariot was as necessary for him as for Erichthonius. But he found he could live without their help, and he felt the importance of being his own master. He was intimate, says the Chevalier Ramsay (writing to France in defence of Pope's character) with several successive ministers, and often with many at the same time. Thus circumstanced, it would have been easy for him to create a large fortune, had he availed himself of the disgrace of one party, in order to recommend himself to the other. He was determined to live and die, (imitate him who can !)

"Unplac'd, unpension'd, no man's heir or slave."

Swift judiciously praises Pope for this spirit, in the following couplet,

*"None loves his king or country better,
Yet none was ever less their debtor."*

His income, in the last flourishing years of his life, amounted to about eight hundred

F

pounds

pounds a year; a part of which he dedicated to benevolence, *Res, parva labore, non relicta*. For his father, a zealous papist and Jacobite, would not assist or trust the new government, at the Revolution in eighty-eight; but locked up his money in his chest, like Don Barnard de Castel Blazo, in *Gil Blas*, and lived upon the principal, which was almost exhausted by the time he left Binfield, and arrived with his son at Twickenham, where he died two years after. Before the nation was overwhelmed with taxes, and before life was made so expensive as it is at present, it was sufficient for the moderate purposes of a temperate Bard. "His manners, says Lord Orrery, were delicate, easy, and engaging; and he treated his friends with a politeness that charmed, and a generosity that was much to his honour. Every guest was made happy within his doors. Pleasure dwelt under his roof, and elegance presided at his table." He was a Whig in state; for he explodes,

"*Tb' enormous faith of millions made for one.*"

His

His political principles, as delineated in his poems, seem to be almost republican. Perhaps, like Dr. King, our Oxford Cicero, he came over to the cause of the people at last. Notwithstanding the applause in the theatre (excuse, reader, this short ramble!) on the *cum venerit ipse, canemus*; the Doctor told a high-church friend, that, when they found *the young man was not to be trusted*, he forsook the party, for which, through more than half a century, he had pleaded with his pen, his purse, and his person, and became a republican. In what sense of the word? Probably, in that of Sir Thomas Smith, of Locke, and of Sydney. He went up with the University address (*credite posteri!*) on the accession of his present Majesty: and thus gave up a *jure divino*, for an act of parliament chief magistrate. If Pope had been living, and one whom "Isis or Cam made Doctor of her Laws," he might have been persuaded to have done the like. Pope never was molested on account of the form of that religion in which he was born, bred, and died.

Every man lives and dies his own way in this land of liberty. Two pious and not unpoetical lines fastened on my memory very early ; and shew the resignation of their author to his Creator :

“ Safe in the hands of God’s disposing pow’r,
Or in the natal or the mortal hour.”

An intelligent reader of these sheets gave it me as his opinion, that he had no doubt Pope was so sensible a man, (and there is a cant expression, “ that all men of sense are of the same religion,”) that, if he had lived in the times of old Rome, he would, in conformity to the religion of the state, have sacrificed a cock to *Æsculapius*. Religion, with Voltaire, is a matter of Geography. The Author of the *Spleen* seems to be very easy on this point ; for he says,

“ But, to avoid religious jars,
The laws are my expositors,
Which in my doubting mind create
Conformity to church and state.
I go, pursuant to my plan,
To Mecca, with the caravan.”

Death

Death does not seem to have taken Pope by surprize. When it came upon him, and he thought he was dying, "of a hundred good symptoms," he only perceived that he was deprived of the power of thinking. If I am not mistaken, he had some time before complained, that he had been under an inability of thought for a whole day. Hooke, the Roman Historian, and a Roman Catholic (whose ancestor came over with the Duke of Monmouth, and was a prisoner at Sedgemoor), was at hand to recommend a priest to him, from the example of his father, *in articulo mortis*. A nobleman, who has been mentioned as Pope's neighbour, asked Mr. Hooke, if Pope died a Roman Catholic? "He died, said this attendant, in the *form* of one;" an answer that was received as a jesuitical one: but it is certain, that Popery had our dying poet all to herself. Two lines of his, almost copied from Cowley or Crashaw, charitably pronounce mercy to men of every religion, provided it is not a religion without morality:

“ For modes of faith let graceless zealots
fight ;

His can't be wrong, whose life is in the
right.”

The display of the last quotation, carries the writer back, to observe, that Dr. Hurd and the *Adventurer* produce a number of Pope's imitations. “ One sees, says the philosophical critic, that Pope's view, is to surpass his original, which, it is said, was always his way when he imitated.” The *Adventurer*, who, if I do not judge amiss, is the learned, classic Scholar at Winchester, mentions also, with applause, the intention of a Frenchman to compile a treatise “ concerning things that have been said but once ;” which he remarks would be contained in a very small pamphlet. Mr. Lockman, whose laborious application obtained for him the *languages*, and who was a translator for half a century, had once thoughts, as he said, of composing a treatise on *Literary Thefts*. If this offspring of the pen had not been one of the *post nati*, too much of this unoriginal Rhapsody must have found a place there.

Lockman, though not praised by Pope, had a portion of his esteem. He dedicated a translation of a Latin Oration, written by Porée, the Jesuit, in praise of dramatic poetry, to him. By the by, Pope had often the frankincense of dedications to regale himself with, to say nothing of complimentary verses, from the greater and lesser poets. Hooke dedicates his first volume of the Roman History to him, which, he says, was "like hanging out a sign with a great name at the bottom of it, to catch the traveller as he goes by." Though Lockman was by no means the best poet in England, *he was something more, and better*, he was one of the honestest men in it. Though called *the Lamb* among his first literary friends, he had the spirit to reply, to a person who spoke rudely of his poetry, and who had a mark set upon him by Pope, "Thank God! my name is not at full length in the Dunciad!" It were pity that he who composed so many lives in the General Dictionary, should not have one in the Biographia. Thus much is due to one of the first acquaintances this writer was blessed with.—

To return to Pope, with whom the pen set out. He did not resist conversion, when it was attempted by Atterbury (who was not banished for being a papist); nor was he offended when it was mentioned jocularly by others. Nay, I believe, he speaks of his religion with some pleasantry; and says, in one of his letters to Lord Halifax, after the Accession, "that he is in the high road to be compleatly ruined, for that he was both a *poet* and a *papist*." He gently put by all disputations on religious topics.

"So we believe, because we so are bred," is a verse from a Catholic poet, and surely may be transcribed by a Protestant. Least of all did Pope affect to make a proselyte. He lived and died a member of the *church* of Rome, but not of the *court* of Rome; in the distinction of Digby, Lord Bristol, of the last century. Though he had not left his house at Twickenham, in complaisance to the proclamation, and retired to a more decent distance from the capital, just before the breaking-out of the last rebellion, Power would never have

have laid her persecuting talons upon him. Marcellus ordered the life of Archimedes to be spared; though he had defended Syracuse against him: *Peritus in arte non debet mori.*

Alexander, when he was sacking Thebes, such was his regard for Pindar, made no war with his descendents, and spared even the house he lived in. What must Pope have been (if a compliment were always truth) whose meanest talent was his wit, according to the line of Swift? He intended, as well as pretended, to be "to virtue only and her friends a friend:" neither a slave to the Big-endians nor the Little-endians: one who claimed the title of an honest man, whom in the most beautiful sentence derived from an expression of Plato, he thus characterises,

"*An honest man's the noblest work of God.*"

Happy would it be for every one, who quotes this boasted apophthegm, and it is the fashion to quote it, to write it on the heart as well as on the memory!

Sir William Trumbal seems to have given Pope the first hint of translating the Iliad. He declares to him his opinion of his abilities

lities for that work, from the specimens he had already published. He praises the Rape of the Lock; and says that his Temple of Fame will always stand open for himself. He loved the Muses, and was loved by them. He commended and recommended Pope in the strongest manner. His advice to him, upon his coming up to town, was fatherly and affectionate; to abstain from all the intemperance of clubs, and to take especial care of his health, was his earnest sollicitation. His passions were high, but his constitution checked indulgence. I do not find that he was a water-drinker, nor that it can be said of him, in the praises of Horace, *abstinuit vino et venere*. It is reported that Pope would not have refused the toast at the club; but that Addison turned his glass up-side-down, and told him, "Pope, you know you can't drink wine." No man was more beholden to the bottle than Addison. It was then, "when his pulse was made to beat quicker," as Steele describes him, he shone with the wit of Terence, when in company with Scipio and Lælius. Burnet observes of Lord Dorset, till his spirits were elevated with

with wine, he was but an ordinary man, but that drinking dissolved his oppression of phlegm, and enabled him to set the table in a roar. Three very small glasses of wine we hear of Pope's drinking before he left his guests under his own roof at Twickenham, on his going to bed. Waller, the poet, drank no liquor but water; and this is a peculiarity of our great English Philologer. The fun of Trumbal began to set, before Pope's was appearing in the horizon. He died before Pope left Binfield, who wrote his epitaph, which stands the first in his collection. Anecdote mentions the singularity of Trumbal's walking on foot to Constantinople, where he was our ambassador. But what was that to the rambles of Coryat, Lithgo, or even of *walking Webbe*? This great walker was also a wit, if he composed the following epigram ascribed to him. It does not cost the reader, nor the transcriber, much. The subject of it is, his pulling off his coat after his arrival at Rome, from Calais.

“ Lie

“ Lie there, thou coat, thro’ various regions tost,
 And take that ’nap which thou so long hast
 lost !”

May all great men who are worn out in the service of the state, or who are too good for the times they live in, retire and enjoy *otium cum dignitate*, with or without a pension, like Sir William Trumbal !

Perhaps it would have been better, if this composition had been in the third person. For, *I, the little hero of each tale*, may offend the otherwise good-natured reader. Chance, more than vanity (“that passion of a little mind and a cold heart,” as Dr. Gregory stigmatizes it) fell on his mode of narration.— On reciting, in my younger days, the Universal Prayer before Tacitus Gordon (a person formerly much known and much talked of, but whose name will be hardly revived, till it appears alphabetically in the new edition of the Biographia), I remember I made a pause after these lines, “That mercy I to others show, That mercy show to me !” It would have been well, says he, if Pope had
 ob-

observed that conduct to others. Can he lay his hand upon his heart, and say, that he has? He used to say of Pope, that he was a great poet, but a weak reasoner. He alluded to some late conversation that had passed, at Lord Radnor's, on the intolerance of speculative opinions. He remarked, what since makes a figure in print, that to read Pope's epistolary correspondence, you would think that he and his friends possessed all the wit, and wisdom, and honesty in the nation. The public applied the character in the last book of the *Dunciad* to that gentleman,

“Where Tindal dictates and Silenus fumes.”

If Gordon took this to himself, it accounted for what he said of Pope, for no man can talk of a foe as he does of a friend. Pope's subscription to Homer was so great (for he says, that “he found more friends than Homer ever wanted”) that it made his future life independent, and helped “to gild the evening of his day.” He purchased some annuities out of the estate of *John of Bucks*, with his profits from the *Grecian Rhapsodist*, who was obliged to stroll to the halls of the great, to recite his verses,

verfes, according to Dr. Blackwell, to get his bread, and to obtain a goblet of wine.

Having before me Mr. Wood's Eſſay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer, I find a period for tranſcription. The reader, if he is not too learned, will be pleaſed to be told, that the author of it read the Iliad and Odſſey, in the countries where Achilles fought, where Ulyſſes travelled, and where Homer fung. On his return to England, he was put into parliament, and was employed as Secretary to Lord Chatham, and was ſo much taken up with public buſineſs, that he could not find leiſure to compleat *Homer's Travels*. This manly piece of criticiſm was poſthumous, and publiſhed by the moſt learned Mr. Bryant. "Now though it muſt be acknowledged, that Mr. Pope is the only tranſlator, who has, in a certain degree, kept alive that divine ſpirit of the poet, which has almoſt expired in other hands; yet I cannot help thinking, that thoſe, who wiſh to be thoroughly acquainted, either with the manners and characters of Homer's age, or the landſcape and geography of his country, will

will be disappointed, if they expect to find them in this translation." He accounts for this, by saying, that "Pope endeavoured to accommodate his author to the ideas of those for whom he translates."—If Homer is to talk English again, let him do it in prose.—

Is it illiberal to remark, that three of the greatest poets the world ever beheld laboured under such personal imperfections as to put them, for sensitive happiness at least, on a level with the meanest peasant? *Gaudeant bene nati!* is quoted by Sir William Temple, with the highest satisfaction. But, as the elegant author of the Origin of Evil observes, and it surely is applicable to Pope, "the sufferings of the sick are greatly relieved by many trifling gratifications imperceptible to others, and sometimes almost repaid by the inconceivable transports occasioned by the return of health and vigour."

Though Pope turned all he wrote into wit and into gold, yet it may be questioned whether Churchill, that able and intrepid satirist (who, as somebody spoke of him, "had the courage to write, what others had not cou-

rage

rage to think"), did not demand and obtain more money from the booksellers. Mr. Murphy perhaps wishes his personal satires (no mean compositions) to be forgot, with the passions that inflamed them. He can spare that string from his lyre. Churchill tried with his political friend, the popular author of the North Briton, "how far the liberty of the press would carry him." His satires were as much read, (the first day of publication was almost the sale of an edition;) and he had as extensive a field to range in for sport. His intention was to fetch blood at every stroke. But his weapon was not so sharp as Pope's. His pen, like the sword of Michael the Archangel in Milton, mowed down whole ranks at a time, and inflicted wounds that never closed. The pen of Churchill wakened every character from repose, or that was basking in the sunshine of the court, as Ithuriel did Satan by the touch of his spear. He consulted his companion, (who, for so many years, *rode on the air of whirlwind*;) on one of his pieces, who assured him, in alliterative epithets, "that it must succeed, for
it

it was *personal, political, and poetical*.”—“This Writer does not care, says a wounded friend, with one of the fatires in his hand, how wretched he makes some people for life, for the wanton gratification of a few hours!” Churchill’s performances are superior to Whitehead’s (though of his *Manners* Paul printed four thousand copies), but are not comparable to *London*, and to *The Vanity of Human Wishes*. Pope was alive to praise the merits of the first, and Churchill commended them both. The *Prophecy of Famine*, wrote with the furious spirit of Tyrtæus, might, at a former time, have set the two nations, now good friends, together by the ears. But it was written at the only moment when it could find readers. To finish the idea of Churchill. He was not improperly described, in a poem (said to be written by Garrick, who loved and feared him,) as going about with a weapon in his hand :

“ ——— to aim a blow,
Impartial bard, at friend and foe.”

From his writings we may retire,

G

“ ——— find-

“ — finding like a friend,
Something to blame, and something to
commend:”

and observe, in the words of Horace on
Lucilius, *erat quod tollere velles*. The man
and the author were very unlike. He lashed
as a satyrift, but forgave as a man. He was
not quite a Dorset,

“ The best good man, with the worft na-
tur'd Mufe.”

Pope's temper was easily ruffled: Gales
became ftorms in his bofom. He was both a
fenfitive plant, and a porcupine. He felt
very foon, and raifed (at his command) dur-
able feelings in others. He was no ft ranger
to the noble nor ignoble paffions, in com-
mon with other mortals. Love, ambition,
envy, revenge, avarice, compaffion, and pride,
influenced his actions, and directed his pen.
But hold, Reader, his great and good quali-
ties outweighed all his felfifh and malevo-
lent ones.

“ He that is with the feweft faults endow'd,
Is but the beft of what cannot be good,”

fays Smart, in his Horatian Canons.

His

His natural irritability (*for touch me, and no minister so sore*, says Pope) “helped to make the blade wear out its scabbard,” as the King of Prussia wrote of Voltaire. Perhaps it is better to be all over feeling, than to be totally without. The understanding itself is but a downright sluggard, unless roused by the passions. Pope was never married: but not on the suggestion Fontenelle employs on Sir Isaac Newton, because, “probably, he had not time to think of it.” The dangerous lines against marriage came without impropriety from the character of his Eloisa; but would not have been suitable language for a man who regarded all the laws of his country, and was so great a lover of order in society. Could Pope write so well and so ardently of love, and not be sensible of its effects? He certainly knew it, by sentiment, by passion, and by appetite. The ridiculous story of Cibber, who cried out, that “he had saved Homer,” was probably true, though it was not fair to relate it. But it is generally the case with wits, as well as gladiators, neither to give, nor take quarter.

The publication of this adventure, and annexing a print to it, stung Pope to the quick. Whether the affection for Miss Blount, which was of the longest date, was purely platonic, "concerns nor me nor thee to know." That Lady had a great ascendancy over the mind of our poet. He left her the greatest part of his fortune: and, to oblige her, he ungenerously quarrelled with *the Man of Bath*. Cæsar governed the world; but a woman governed Cæsar. An old story, and no new case. The neighbourhood of Twickenham was credulous and censorious, like all country villages. "On eagle's wings immortal scandals fly," says Juvenal, in English: No court of enquiry was set up to gratify the malignity of curiosity. It ought to have been observed before, that it is not agreed whether Addison or Pope were most to blame for their jealousy of each other. The vindication of the conduct of the first has made its appearance in a long note, under his article, in the new edition of the *Biographia*, composed by one, who decided, for a great number of years, in points of more difficulty

difficulty and importance, in Westminster-hall. But in the case of his conduct to Lord Bolingbroke on the Patriot King (which only told, as Warburton asserts, what every body knew before), Pope certainly could not be justified, even by his defender. Some anecdotes, printed the other day, of what Bolingbroke said to a Mr. Fraigneau, pointing to the spot in his yard at Battersea, where the fifteen hundred copies brought hither by the *honest printer* lately mentioned ("and were burned in one common fire," in the words of Mallet the editor) shew his unforgiving anger. The offence was no less than a breach of trust, which, as Johnson, *our sturdy moralist*, says, has always something criminal. But Pope possibly saw it in another light. Warburton allows, that Bolingbroke, though the last in pity, was the first in justice to complain. It appears, from the printed letters of his sister, Lady Luxborough, that she joined in the cry against Pope, and gave into her brother's resentments, on this violation of confidence. Was not this treatment injudicious, and too severe against the man

who had praised him to the skies; by whom even his political character was exalted in poetry, whilst it was degraded in history; to whom his Lordship inscribes so many of his metaphysical essays; and who was not alive to defend himself? There are two ways of telling a story, and Pope might have told it very differently, or have taken ample revenge. A pen that can whiten, may blacken. A fastidious reader, who is every moment expecting novelties, may exclaim, and perhaps have done it already—"All that I have hitherto read, may be true; but I have met with it elsewhere." Let him be satisfied with an answer from Father Paul. "Every book should be as compleat as possible within itself; and should never refer, for any thing material, to other books." The wish of this pen would be, to leave common things to books, as Burnet says of his intentions respecting his history, and to make up their deficiencies.

As there are readers of all sorts, and thousands who are not yet become readers, this volatile performance may have a chance to be
taken

taken up, from a parlour window seat, and occupy an hour of indolence or leisure ; and a reader, not knowing what others have said upon this subject, may get some information from this piece. There are millions, where the English language prevails (“ obliged in business or in arts to drudge”), to whom little more than the name of Mr. Pope is yet arrived. It has been observed, that Pope was never seen to laugh. Johnson asserts of the misanthropic Swift, that he stubbornly resisted any tendency to laughter. The people of Iceland, according to Mr. Troil, are remarkably grave, and are hardly ever seen to laugh. Laughter seems to be as effectually banished as by a proclamation. Certainly Pope was neither Heraclitus nor Democritus. He had never been in the Cave of Trophœnus, nor perhaps thought it beneath the dignity of a great man to laugh, as Lord Chesterfield asserts it to be. “ I am sure, since I have had the full use of my reason, says that polite nobleman to his son, to whom he writes the sentiments of his heart, nobody has heard me laugh.” Pope was naturally

serious and calm, except when he put on the *Sardonic* smile.

The pen, impatient reader, is almost at the end of its ramble. Though, to use the coarse words of Bentley, "I may neither be leaner by censure, nor plumper by commendation;" yet, I am not without hope, we may part good friends. For the Rhapsodist (*he seeks no better name*) has no intention of giving offence to the smallest or the greatest person alive, nor of praising the dead at the expence of the living. He had rather be permitted to step forward with the bold reply made use of by the young peasant in the celebrated castle of Otranto, *I have offended no good angel; and I am afraid of no ill one.* Pope was never out of the kingdom, though he languished to travel abroad. "Who've seen but little, can't have much to say"—at least of foreign countries. For this purpose he put out to sea, from Southampton, with Lord Peterborough, by way of experiment, but was disordered by the sickness incident to that element, like Virgil in the Bay of Naples, and glad to retire back again.

We

We should not perhaps be inquisitive to know, in relation to any other poet, whether he rode any horse besides Pegasus. Pope throws a great deal of humour into a letter to Lord Burlington, about 1715, containing the conversation between him and Lintot, who overtook our Bard as he was riding upon a mare of his Lordship's, in Windsor Forest, and desired to accompany him to Oxford. "The motion, said the poet to his bookseller, as they are jogging on, aids my fancy: a round trot very much awakens my spirits, &c. &c." Their appearance on the road might have afforded a picturesque subject for a Hogarth or a Bunbury. For Pope thus describes the group. "My man before (a proof he was no good horseman), my courteous stationer beside (in all the eagerness of making proposals to his author), and the *aforsaid Devil* behind," with Pope's cloak-bag, and his master's portmanteau.

Pope lived to the age of fifty-six. Whilst he was sensible of the hourly decay of his mortal faculties, he was talking to his surrounding friends of new proofs for the immortality

mortality of his own soul. He had lived continually amongst the great,

“No pimp of pleasure, and no spy of state,” as he assures us ; but he did not choose to be beholden to them for assistance in the last sad office. His vanity was to end with his life, *nor nod in sable plumes*. He directed, that he should be carried to the grave at Twickenham by twelve poor men of that place. All that was perishable of him expired on May 30, 1744. The Bishop of Gloucester, who survived Pope to 1780, erected a monument to him in Twickenham Church. He remembered his servant John Searl, for his fidelity, in his will, with a pecuniary legacy. If it were not too ludicrous to mention it, he fared better than poor Gil Blas, from the legacy of the old canon Sedillo. Our son of Apollo and the Muses, if mythology is not now impertinence, performed all the filial duties to his earthly parents, and was sorry when their departure put an end to his pious labours. “They dropped, like mellow fruit, that ripened long.” Horace praises his father for the good education

education he gave him, and for bringing him into the conversation of young men of quality. Our Poet's commendations are as just and as generous. What parents would not wish for such a son ! what son would not wish for such parents ! He mentions them both very frequently in his poems and his letters ; and composed a sepulchral inscription for them in Twickenham Church. An epitaph from thence made its appearance in the news-paper, the other day, written by Pope, upon his nurse, which records her attendance upon him for 38 years. Her name deserves to be known, as much as the nurse of Ulysses and of Æneas. She did more, by her daily and her nightly care, "*To help him through that long disease his life,*" than Dr. Arbuthnot, to whom the line is addressed. Dr. Swift buried, and wrote a lapidary inscription on an honest servant, whom Lord Chesterfield affects to call an *humble friend*. The good deserve an epitaph, as well as the great. Mr. Richardson preserved a multitude of friendly short letters, and message cards, that Pope's familiarity daily honoured him with.

with. These were purchased at the auction, with his manuscript Essay. They may be preserved as reliques, but ought not to be exhibited in that large museum the world. An author, says Moore, before his Female Fables, is the reverse of all other objects : he magnifies at a distance, but diminishes at approach. Life cannot be every moment employed in important matters. Great geniuses perform common things in the common manner. Only it is worth their while, not to be seen engaged in trifles. “Do you wish to know, says Shenstone, what Mr. Pope was about when I saw him last? To the best of my remembrance, says he, he was paring his nails.”—“Does Newton, asks a foreign nobleman, eat and drink and sleep, like other mortals?” Just as other people ; for he had no particulars nor singularities, as a man. To draw to a conclusion : *Pennâ metuente solvi.* The court of Parnassus went into mourning for him. But none did more honour to his memory than Mr. Mason ; “who got, by giving praise.” His Monody, called Musæus, shewed the author
a happy

a happy imitator of Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, and Pope. The title-page was adorned with a drawing, by that old practitioner in elegant groups of conversation figures, Mr. Hayman, expressive of the visit of his brother Poets, to the expiring bard, who is attended by Virtue. All Mr. Pope's poetical pieces have been turned into all the languages, over and over again. Probably (as Denham says in general of translations) much may be lost in the transfusion. If there is half the difficulty in the translating of Pope as of Shakspeare, it is better for their admirers to learn the language at once, and understand the original. English is become a tongue as well as a language. It is more talked, as well as more studied, since we became so great a people. Of Shakspeare and Pope, the thought is but the half that can be given; the expression must be totally unknown. Most translators, like Hannibal Caro, as expressed by Dryden, "are foot poets, who lacquey by the side of their original, but never mount behind him." Perhaps Camoens and Tasso would thank my two friends, Mickle and Hoole,

Hoole, for the justice done them : their translations read like originals. The works of Pope are to be met with in every library in Europe.

This Sketch is become the more tedious to the reader, on account of a rainy day ; a circumstance for which Lord Faulkland pities all unlearned gentlemen. In my own defence, I detained the pen in my hand some time longer. It is composed by one who has received great pleasure from the poems of Mr. Pope, though they neither found nor made him a poet. He has not the enthusiastic veneration to commemorate his birth-day, as Silius Italicus did that of Virgil, according to Pliny ; but he has constantly before his eyes his volumes in his book-room, with a good print of him by Pond and Houbraken ; together with a correct drawing of the villa and the grotto, which were actually taken in the life-time of Mr. POPE.

A D D I T I O N.

A FEW words more, ere it is too late. It has been already almost ~~admitted~~^{argued}, there have been as good versifiers as Mr. Pope. Mr. Hayley must be admitted of that small number. His last poem of the Triumphs of Temper, amongst its many happy incidents, contains an enlargement of Pope's Cave of the Spleen, and is full of energy and excellent poetry. He has augmented the number of rhymes, the paucity of which, in all Mr. Pope's poetry, is astonishing.

It was not recollected, where it should have been (in p. 86.) that Lord Bolingbroke, in his letter to Mr. Pouilly (a predecessor of Montesquieu's) mentions three persons, of sufficient knowledge and temper to govern the world, and means himself, Pouilly, and Pope. How infatuated must his judgement have been, if he could suspect that Pope, for the paltry profit of an edition of his Patriot King, could be a traitor to his Patron!

F I N I S.

ADDITIONAL

King, could be a reason why I have not
the policy profit of an edition of his letters
have been, if he could, I trust that Pope, for
Pope. How mistaken was his judgement
the world, and means himself, I regretted and
further knowledge of I venture to guess
these poems) - mentions three periods of
his letter to Mr. Baily (a portion of
been (on p. 85) - that the Bishop, in
It was not really a criticism, I think
Pope's poetry is - a criticism - a criticism
of rhyme, the poem which, in all Mr.
last poetry. He has written a number
the whole, and a full and complete
contains an account of Pope's Cave of
Tomb, enough to many happy readers.
number. This last poem of the Triumph of
Mr. Baily, with its account of that small
have been as good readers as this hope.
It has been already stated - I think - that